

## REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested. By this amendment, claims 13, 17, 27 and 34 have been amended. Claims 13-32 and 34-43 are pending in the application.

In the final Office Action mailed January 14, 2008, on page 2 claims 17-26 and 34-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. The claims have been amended to clarify how the chains are oriented. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

On pages 2-4 of the Office Action, claims 17-26 and 34-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumoto *et al.* (EP 1083347) in view of Askeland (*The Science and Engineering of Materials*). This rejection is respectfully traversed, for the following reasons.

First, Matsumoto *et al.* does not disclose a *stretched* fibrous member of thermoplastic resin including oriented molecular chains oriented longitudinally along the fibrous member as recited in claims 17 and 34. Rather, Matsumoto *et al.* merely discloses adding carbon filler to synthetic resin, but does not disclose or suggest molecular chains oriented longitudinally as recited in claims 17 and 34. Moreover, a stretched fibrous member does not only provide longitudinally oriented fibers; the *stretched* fibrous member has a tensile strength which is greater than an *unstretched* fibrous member, and thus is not equivalent to an unstretched fibrous member. While a product-by-process limitation does not further limit the claim (as the Examiner pointed out), the *products* are not the same.

Second, claim 17 recites that the tape-forming synthetic resin and the fibrous member-forming thermoplastic resin are in the same family; claim 34 recites that the tape-forming synthetic resin and the fibrous member-forming thermoplastic resin are identical resins or include principal components of identical resins. Matsumoto *et al.* does not disclose or suggest these claim elements. In lines 14 and 15 on page two of the Office Action, the Examiner appears to assert that two resins may be in the same family because they both contain carbon. Carbon fiber is not a resin, but an inorganic material. Two resins are *not* in the same family because they

contain carbon; two resins require a common chemical structure to be in the same family. In the fifth bulleted point on page 3, the Office Action states "... both resins are in the same family ... (both resins can have carbon) ...." Containing a same filler is *not* sufficient to put two resins into the same family. This definition of "family" is contrary to the ordinary meaning of the term as used in the art, and as used in the description of the present invention. Similarly, two resins are not identical, and their principal components are not identical, because they contain the same filler.

Moreover, Matsumoto *et al.* teaches a reinforcing material (*i.e.*, fibrous member-forming thermoplastic resin) "...integrated within the belt member 21 in order to enhance the tensile strength and the flexural strength of the belt member 21." (see Matsumoto *et al.* column 6, lines 45 and 46) To *enhance* the tensile strength, Matsumoto teaches a *different* material for the reinforcing material, such as "... a glass fiber ... [or] a synthetic resin the tensile strength or the flexural strength of which has been improved by adding carbon filler or the like." (see Matsumoto *et al.* column 7, lines 35-37). A glass fiber is clearly not a resin at all. There is no indication in Matsumoto that the two materials should be the same. Even if the resins are taken to be the same, to the degree that the added fiber *strengthens* the fibrous member, the addition of additional fiber to the resin matrix *weakens* the ability of the belt-forming material to bond to the member-forming material (see specification, page 3, lines 16-24), thus resulting in a weaker, less durable product.

The advantage of the present invention is that it allows the fibrous member-forming material to be *both* greater in tensile strength *and* strongly bonded to the belt-forming material. The advantages of using similar or identical resins are illustrated, for example, in comparison of between Example 11 and Example 12 in Table 2 on page 36, or between Example 4 and Example 5 in Table 1 on page 27, wherein the tensile strengths of the stretched filaments are nearly identical, but the belts produced with different resins for the belt-forming material and the member-forming material show markedly decreased tensile strength. Matsumoto *et al.* does not disclose or suggest the combination of features as claimed in the present invention, according to independent claims 17 and 34.

Askeland also does not disclose or suggest a stretched fibrous member of thermoplastic resin including oriented molecular chains oriented longitudinally along the fibrous member as recited in claims 17 and 34. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that there is no disclosure or

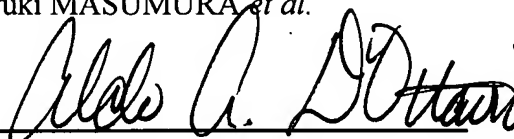
teaching in Askeland, or any of the prior art of record, that would have caused a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify Matsumoto *et al.* so as to result in or otherwise render obvious the present invention as recited in claims 17 and 34. Thus, it believed that claims 17 and 34, as well as claims 18-26 and 35-43 depending therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels that there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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